The Black Cat

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February 1902

The Well-Bred Young Lady in a Barber Shop at Midnight.

A Hair-breadth 'Scape, Margaret Steele Anderson.
The Pink Umbrella, Evelyn Snead Barnett.
Force of Circumstance, Mary F. Leonard.
The Golden Tresses, Mrs. Attwood R. Martin (Geo. Madden Martin).
Ladies' Night, Alice Caldwell Hegan.

The Gargoyle Room. Anna McClure Sholl.

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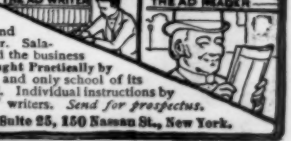

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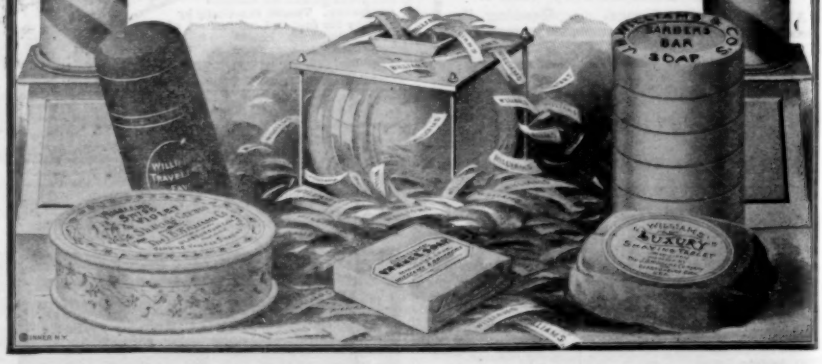

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The Well-bred Young Lady in a Barber Shop at Midnight.*

[There was given to The Authors' Club of Louisville, Ky., the problem of writing a short story in which a well-bred young lady has to find herself, in a natural manner, in a barber shop at midnight, and as a result the following five tales were produced.]

WILL now," said Scheherazade II., "relate the story of the young and well-bred lady in a barber shop at midnight—"

But with these words the modern rival of the illustrious story-teller of the thousand and one nights fell back upon her cushions.

The Sultana was dead! The lingual paralysis and paresis caused by overtaxing her inventive faculties had come upon her.

Nothing could exceed the Sultan's grief, but as he was about to abandon himself to transports of despair the last words of his beautiful and accomplished Sultana recurred to him. Why had she not lived but one hour longer? What was the story of the young and well-bred lady in a barber shop at midnight? How could a young and well-bred lady be in a barber shop at midnight?

As the curiosity of the Sultan was insatiable his grief became double-edged. She, he declared, who could relate him the story would be given the place left vacant in his harem.

But a fondness of the Commander of the Faithful for sacking his wives in the waters of the Bosphorus was suspected by the

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ladies of Stamboul, and not one in all his dominions could be found who would say she knew the story of the young and well-bred lady in a barber shop at midnight.

Then a deep melancholy seized upon the Sultan. In vain did his courtiers endeavor to arouse his interest. He remained gloomy and insensible.

Finally, such became the condition of the unfortunate ruler that reason fled from his head and the world became black before his eyes. Excessive grief took possession of him; his countenance became sallow and his frame emaciated. His advisers feared for his life, when at the palace gate one day appeared five ladies in tourist garb, each carrying a leather satchel and armed with a tightly rolled umbrella. They were members, they explained, of a personally conducted party from over the sea. Each claimed that she and she only knew the story of the young and well-bred lady in a barber shop at midnight.

When the Grand Vizier saw them his joy knew no bounds. He returned to the Sultan and making obeisance before him said:

"Tell him who is oppressed with anxiety that anxiety will not last. 'As happiness passeth away, so passeth away anxiety.'

"Know, Sultan of sultans, that at the palace gates stand five virgins, each one more beautiful than the other and each claiming to know the story of the young and well-bred lady in a barber shop at midnight."

Then the color returned to the Sultan's face and he recovered the flush of health. "Let them," he commanded, "be admitted at once."

Declining the refreshment which according to custom the attendants would have pressed upon them, the ladies lost no time in ceremony. Being members of a personally conducted party, their stay in Stamboul was limited, so they announced themselves ready for instant audience.

At the sight of them neither the Sultan nor his court could repress a start not unmixed with horror. Armed with their satchels and umbrellas, clad in abbreviated skirts and other strange garb, the ladies gave an impression of energy and briskness most abnormal. Yet the faces of the five, differing in type though they were, were all beautiful.

While, however, the Sultan was observing these things, the foremost of the ladies, of a slim, elegant figure, with youth and health written upon her cheek, addressed herself to him in these words:

"Having previously agreed to proceed in alphabetical order, and being desirous of rejoining our party without delay, with your permission I will at once tell the only true story of the young and well-bred lady in a barber shop at midnight."

At this, so commanding was the manner and gesture of the speaker, the company seated themselves. The lady herself, removing a jaunty straw hat and sticking its long pin therein, ruffled back her hair from a forehead like the moon on her fourteenth night and, turning a magnificent pair of straightforward eyes upon the Sultan, thus began:

"My father, a State official of Kentucky, dying suddenly in the execution of his duty, I resolved to make use of the patrimony he left me in travel. My money being about exhausted, and seeing a possible future in this business, I have come to Constantinople for the purpose named. I hope the court interpreter is making my meaning clear?"

The Sultan, who had never been able to remove his gaze from the easy, smiling and steadfast look the lady had fastened upon him, bowed.

The lady thereupon resumed:

"Having thus explained my presence, I will, without further delay, relate 'A Hair-breadth 'Scape' —"

A Hair-breadth 'Scape.*

BY MARGARET STEELE ANDERSON.

T was Saturday night and late — very late, in fact, for the hour was close upon twelve — and, except for the little shop of Achille Gabord, there was no light or activity on the length of the long, narrow street. Achille, however, was frequently last in closing, for he was not only a favorite barber, but could really have claimed — had he thought of claiming — that his shop was at times an extemporaneous club-house for the masculine wits and gossips of the little city. To-night he had had more than his usual number of Saturday customers, and even now there were two under lather and sheet, while lingering at the door was a group which made ready to depart by lighting cigars and exchanging some last bits of comment. Of this comment the greater part was political — for the year was '63 and the town was in a border State, where feeling was divided and bitterness ran deep, and where, moreover, a new Federal force had but recently been established.

"They're lookin' for a spy — this time o' night!" said one man, with a leisurely chuckle. "Met a squad of 'em out on Chestnut Street, 'bout half an hour ago. They'll catch him, too — they were hot on his trail, they said."

"Hmh?" responded another. "Well, I hope he'll give 'em the slip, myself."

"I heartily trust they will get him, sir!" said an elderly gentleman, with a stern thud of his gold-headed stick. "He's a traitor, sir! I hope they'll hang him, sir!"

"'Tis yerself's the good Unionist, Misther Quentin," said a little Irishman, genially —

> "'Confound their pollytics,
> Frustrate their knavish tricks,
> On him our hopes we fix —
> God save the King!'

'Tis fine sintiments, Misther Quentin — an' here's lookin' at ye!'

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He made a pantomimic gesture of drinking, and the other men laughed, Mr. Quentin himself having a smile for this drollery.

"Well," said the latter, "I'd a pretty good following in the shop to-night. There was Barkley, and Bishop, and Harrison —"

"An' half a dozen good rebels to fight ye," said the Irishman quickly. "Oh? I'm not bethrayin' annybody! Did ye see the batch that wint over the river yistherday? The giner'l, he's got 'em all in the pinitintiary as snug as ye plaze."

"There was quite a crowd," said a young man at his elbow. "Did you happen to know any, sir?"

The speaker had just come in, and as he accosted the Irishman the latter looked at him with a touch of close scrutiny. He was a slight fellow, of smooth face and delicate but well-made figure; his suit was of black broadcloth, very thoroughly brushed, and there was that in his manner and his bearing which suggested the young professional man.

"Can you wait on me yourself?" he asked of Achille. "I want a hair-cut, and I'm in a hurry — and you're the quickest fellow I know."

"Eh! One moment!" said the little Frenchman agreeably. "One moment, Meestaire Beckwith — and me, I will sairve you myself. You wait?"

Beckwith nodded assent. He had known Achille but three days, but had chanced by a courtesy to gain the barber's admiration and friendship, and had actually been admitted behind the shop, where dwelt Marie, the wife, and the small Suzanne, and Babette, the charming, the black-eyed, the coquettish. They were not seen in the shop — "No, indeed," said Marie — but Beckwith had met Marie struggling home from the pump with a bucket much too heavy for her, and had helped her to carry it. On the way he had chatted with her in French, and had told her of his year in Paris and his winter in Nice — and thereupon had been presented to the interior of the shop, to taste a real French supper, and, incidentally, to be made love to by Babette when her mother's back turned.

It was only a few moments till there was a chair ready for him, and Achille stood behind him with scissors in hand. As he began

his work, however, there was a stir at the door, and the young negro whose duty it was to open it, and who had gone outside for a moment, bounced in excitedly, announcing with trepidation: "So'gers!"

"Where?" said the Irishman.

"Comin' down de street, marse — 'bout a squah off, suh."

"Comin' to search yo' shop, Achille," said one of the group. "Better look out."

"Eh!" answered the little barber with a characteristic shrug. "Are you anxious, Monsieur?"

There was a laugh at this, and Beckwith joined it; but as Achille bent over him with his scissors, he touched the man's hand and said something in French and under his breath. The barber heard, and his hand suddenly shook, missing Beckwith's hair and almost grazing his cheek. "But — it is impossible," he whispered.

"It is true," said the young man. "What can you do for me?"

Achille did not pause, but grew suddenly very industrious.

"You will obey me, Monsieur?" he breathed. "You will do the thing I tell you — is it not so?"

"Exactly," said Beckwith. "But quick — hurry!"

For answer, Achille paused and held his hand in mid-air, as if listening to something within the house. Then he spoke aloud with an air of excitement.

"Monsieur will excuse me?" he said. "One moment? Some one calls! I fear some one is ill — is fall — "

He vanished — quickly but very naturally — behind the green baize door that shut the shop from the rest of the house. In another moment — in less than a moment — he was back again, this time with a face of wild anxiety.

"Marie!" he exclaimed, half pulling Beckwith from his chair. "She is ill — she is seeck! Monsieur is a doctor — *n'est-ce-pas?* Oh come! *Toute de suite*, Monsieur! *Toute de suite!*"

Beckwith took the cue and answered instantly. "Don't be alarmed," he said in a quiet professional voice. "Is it your wife? Where is she?"

"Back here, Monsieur! Up-stair! Queeck — queeck!"

He flung open the door and Beckwith passed with him behind it and up the dark little stairs.

"But they will search the house, Achille," he said.

"But you will not be in it," whispered the barber. "You will be a girl; come in with Babette."

"At this hour?" exclaimed Beckwith. "Impossible! She is in bed — asleep."

"'In bed — asleep!'" mocked the soft voice of Babette. "Behold us, Monsieur! We are just come from the fair — the little fair for the church — and Maman is as well as she is fat. But — listen — we pretend! Maman is ill on her way home — poor soul, she has probably eaten too much! — and you have helped me to bring her in. You are Louise, my friend — you are a girl! See — here are the clothes, little father! And while Monsieur is putting them on, I will get out the hat and the lovely blonde wig."

For the next two minutes Beckwith was alone, and when Achille came in with the wig it was a girl's figure that met him, graceful and rather distinguished, even in this coarse gown of Babette's.

"The wig — at once!" exclaimed Achille nervously. "Do you hear them? They have come! They are down-stairs! Me, I must fly! Babette — does your mother lie on her bed?"

"And groans beautifully, little father," said Babette from the next room. "Will you enter, Monsieur? And — permit me — I will tie on the hat. So! Now — sit by her and be of a sympathetic countenance. Yes, truly! Do but observe him, Maman! Monsieur, I make you my compliments. You are an actor!"

"Babette! Hush!" said her mother. "Will you never be quiet, child? Thank Heaven, Suzanne can sleep like the dead!"

Even as she spoke — though Achille's voice was heard in feigned protest — the door was flung open and two blue-coated soldiers stood at the threshold.

"They may look, Achille," groaned Marie resignedly. "Louise — fan me, my child."

"Oh, I'll jest glance around, Ma'am," said the corporal politely, but with vigilance. "Ain't in the wardrobe, is he? No, I see he ain't. Nor under the bed? No. Nor behind the sofy? No, Ma'am. Well, John — looks like he'd give us the slip again! I'll be dogged if it don't."

"He is not here," said Achille stoutly. "I tell you at first. You waste your time."

The corporal did not hear him; he was looking at the spy, who was talking in French to Marie. The corporal had no thought of rudeness, but he was naturally curious and loquacious.

"Seems to be some difference of opinion," he said. "Old lady's shakin' her head about it, anyway."

Beckwith heard him and turned. "Oh! Maybe *you* could help me!" he said. "Could you? Just across the street? She won't let her husband go with me — she's afraid she'll die while he's gone. We've been at the fair and she got sick and I helped bring her home. But I've got to get home, myself — my mother'll be uneasy 'bout me."

For a moment the corporal stared; then he rose to the occasion and smiled benignly. He was a man of some fifty years, lean and brown, with a kindly twinkle in his faded eyes.

"Why — I can't go myself, Miss," he said. "But I guess I kin get you home. Jack — the young lady's the corporal now — you take your orders from her. Then you run along down the street an' ketch up with us. Understand?"

The young soldier — a rosy-cheeked, bashful fellow — turned rosier than before and took off his cap to Beckwith.

"Oh, thank you!" said the latter fervently. "I'll be ever so much obliged to you!"

He touched Marie's hair and spoke to her in French, with a voice of condolence. What he said was, "The apple-woman's?"

"Yes," moaned Marie. "But, Monsieur, this is devilment! There is no cause to run!"

"It *is* devilment," admitted Beckwith. "But I couldn't resist it."

Babette's turn came next and the girl tied the strings of her friend's hat with charming solicitude — while Marie groaned in sincerity and was thankful that her husband had gone down to the shop.

"Good-bye," said Beckwith in French. "Have no fear — I am safe — you will hear from me. Tell Suzanne I leave her a kiss — and I will send her some chocolates!"

He went out of the room with a soldier on either side, and they descended the stairs together. The corporal picked up the rest of his men and went out through the shop, but Private Onslow and

the friend of Babette went out by a side door and through the back yard.

"Did you think I was French?" chattered the spy, with charming irrelevance. "I am — half-way. My father was French and I can talk it just like Babette. But my mother, she's American. So I can speak two languages."

"You — you speak 'em beautiful, Miss," said Private Onslow. "You speak like — like a native, Miss."

"Oh, *thank* you!" said Beckwith sweetly.

They went through a dark little alley and a few yards down the adjacent street to a tiny frame cottage. Here Beckwith stopped and held out a slim white hand.

"Good-bye," he said. "I'm *so* much obliged to you. It was *so* good and kind."

"'Tain't nuthin', Miss," murmured the soldier bashfully. "Can't I — can't I wait till you git in?"

"Oh, never mind — I hear Mother now," said Beckwith. "Good-night — I'm *so* much obliged."

He turned toward the door. "It's me, Mother — it's Katy," he said. The soldier faced around and marched off — and Beckwith, who had not knocked and who knew that the man would look back, leaped round the corner of the house and was lost in its shadow.

. . . . . .

It chanced, two or three days later, that O'Neill, the little Irishman who had rallied Mr. Quentin on his loyalty, was alone with Achille in the shop.

"Well now, my man," he said between puffs of his pipe. "That was a fine thrick ye were playin' the other day."

"Treeck?" said Achille, with superb innocence. "Treeck?"

"Yes, 'treeck.' 'Tis the very wurrd for it. Come, come, Achille! I knew her the minnut I laid eyes on her. I'd seen her before, though she niver suspicioned it. Let's hear about her, won't ye?"

"About — who?" said Achille — and this time his stupidity was real.

"Are ye foolish, man?" The speaker looked carefully around the room, and then, in a dramatic whisper, pronounced a name.

"Who is that?" asked Achille — and he was still so honestly dense that O'Neill was convinced.

"Did ye get him out an' niver know ut?" he asked, delightedly.

"Know what?" said Achille.

"By the saints, he niver did!" said O'Neill riotously. "Achille, me good barber, the spy ye got out in girl's dresses — was a girl himself!"

But while the interpreter was yet translating the concluding words of this tale the second lady, small, languishing, dark, glancing at a jewelled watch on her jacket moved forward and as he ended she lifted charming eyes softly veiled with sweeping lashes and in lingering accents began to speak:

"My father, a rich planter of the South, desiring me on the completion of my education to travel, sent me abroad. I need not attempt to deny that while a mere titled husband presents no temptation to an American of the exclusive Southern aristocracy, I would consider an offer from yourself. But since we are hurried for time I will waste no words in explanation, but will at once proceed to tell 'The Story of the Pink Umbrella'—"

The Pink Umbrella.*

BY EVELYN SNEAD BARNETT.

PATTY ELDRED was pink of cheek and brown of hair, which was perhaps the reason that when the Colonel, her father, promised to take her to the reunion in Louisville and told her to get whatever she most needed, she ordered a pink umbrella edged with a gold-brown stripe.

Her best friend asked her why she thought she most needed an umbrella and why — granting that she did — she had chosen such an impossible color as pink?

"Because," was the positive reply, "it always rains at reunions and there is no use taking any good clothes. Pink will stand rain as well as the common green, purple or red, is becoming, and furthermore will be *dressy* in either rain or shine."

The Colonel assured her that her selection showed profound wisdom. However great the crush might be she had made it possible for him to find her at any time, as he had only to make a bee-line for a pink umbrella.

Patty had always gone everywhere with her father, but that everywhere was neither far nor wide, as, with the exception of the Lee ball at "The White" and two trips to Richmond, she had never left the town of Dinsmore, where she had first seen the light. The excitement of making so extended a trip inclined her to airs, so when she waved her hand from the back of the train to the crowd of devoted swains who had come with flowers and candy to speed her on her way, she rather hurt the feelings of Will Rogers, whom she was supposed to favor.

As the train was about rounding a curve he had run by the car calling: "I've a great mind to get ahead of these fellows and meet you in Louisville."

To which she had replied: "Do you think I would look at you

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by the side of the gallant Kentuckians? If you know when you are well off you will stay where you are."

Which retort so roused a certain quality in Will that he went home and packed his valise. Dinsmore was on the highway and trains were plenty.

Patty's train must needs make so many stops to pick up soldiers and their families that it was late by two hours. The Colonel grew fidgety, for he was on the programme for an answer to the first speech of welcome to the National Committee at eight, and he felt in his bones that if given a chance he would make a hit. As they left Lexington he looked at his watch, made a calculation, and announced that by the time he had taken Patty to the hotel and dressed himself he would be just one hour too late.

Patty determined that he should not miss his opportunity to shine on her account, so she made him retire to the dressing-room with the big valise. When they were drawing out from Pewee Valley Station the Colonel came forth, clean-shaven and immaculate in his dress clothes, and seating himself by his daughter's side began to rehearse his speech in a low tone with his lips against the shell of her ear.

Arrived in Louisville he put his daughter and her belongings into a coupé and gave minute instructions and large money to the driver.

"As I engaged the rooms several days ago you will have no trouble whatever," said he as he banged the carriage door.

"And it is raining," cried she jubilantly, shaking the tightly-rolled pink umbrella at him as she was driven off.

When she reached the hotel the crowd in the lobby was somewhat confusing and Patty became a trifle nervous. She felt little, and both she and the umbrella looked very pink. A cheerful bell-boy piloted her to the desk, where she registered in a good vertical hand and, with an air that she fancied was nonchalantly cosmopolitan, asked to be shown to her rooms.

The clerk questioned and investigated and reported that no rooms had been engaged and that none were to be had. Patty's looks appealed to him, so he heard her tale and advised her to go up to one of the parlors, where her father should be sent the moment he arrived.

Patty entered the very red and white room and settled herself in a big armchair near the window, where the roar of carriages and the buzzing of many voices fostered meditation but prevented slumber. She was unaware of the lapse of time when she was suddenly brought to a consciousness of her surroundings by the entrance of a string of porters bearing cots with which they rapidly transformed the parlor into a dormitory and then — Oh, horrors! — an awful man in the corner actually began taking off his clothes.

Patty fled only to bump against more men in the corridor and more cots. Making her way back to the office now swarming with gray coats she again sought the desk. A strange clerk listened politely to her tale of woe. He was certain that her father had not yet arrived, but as he might come at any moment he advised her to stay in sight and — impelled by the pink cheeks and brown eyes — he even went so far as to wake a sleeping soldier and make him vacate his chair.

Tired as Patty was, she was too forlorn and nervous to sit still. She was also embarrassed by the attention she attracted — so many men all staring. She left her chair and went over to a less conspicuous place by the wall. A little farther on she spied a glass door ajar and edging her way towards it found that it led to a dark empty room containing a row of chairs shrouded in white. She chuckled as she found that here she could escape observation yet still remain in sight of the desk. In she slipped, closing the glass door, and, lifting the sheet, climbed into one of the chairs.

"Funny place for a dentist," she said aloud as, settling herself with a relieved sigh, she fixed her eyes on the big register distinctly visible on the clerk's desk. As soon as a familiar head bent over that register she was ready to come to light. In the meantime here was soothing darkness and rest from staring eyes. The chair offered a comfortable reclining position with its cool linen head-rest. Fatigue dulled her brain and before she knew it she slept.

She did not see a white-jacketed man come out of the bar-room, open the door, pull down its green blind, lock a safe and stagger away, but, with the soundness of tired youth and health, slept on.

Then came the Colonel, holding himself with extra straightness,

flushed with the success of his speech. Meeting the cast-iron smile of Clerk Number Three he signed his name with a flourish and asked to be shown to his rooms.

"Rooms!" repeated Number Three, making the word unnecessarily plural, "how many do you want?"

"Two," answered the Colonel, "ordered two weeks ago. My daughter has already taken possession of one of them; I ask to be shown to the other."

The clerk looked at the signature: "N. A. Eldred, Eldred Park, Dinsmore, Va.," then went behind a mottled glass box and consulted another book. Next, he called a tired straw-colored woman, who examined various pigeon holes. Returning, he announced with the same fixed smile that no letter had been received and behind the words the Colonel's sensitiveness saw doubt.

"My daughter is here," he said with quiet firmness, pointing to the modern characters inscribed some lines above his flourishes. "All I ask is to be shown to her room."

Number Three did not know anything about that party, as he was night-clerk just come on duty, but he pointed to the blank opposite the party's name, proving that she had not been assigned a room.

Then the Colonel shed the dignity of the soldier and became the parent. "The man before you probably gave her some corner for the night. Can't you call him up and see?"

"He doesn't sleep here — has a home some distance away, and it would be of no use, as with all the will in the world, he could not create space."

"I came here six hours ago," interrupted one of the bystanders, a smart-looking drummer with upstanding ears, "and I have a cot under the staircase."

"And I, following after, was glad enough to get a slab down in the Turkish bath-rooms," added a very red-faced, little, fat man who looked as if he had already tried his bed and had come to the surface for air.

A very spick and span young man here bent over the register.

"Why, Will — how on earth!"

"Came by train after yours, Colonel. Where do you suppose she is?"

"These people don't seem to know or care. Come, help me find her. One thing is plain — she couldn't get in here, so went somewhere else. Of course she left a message, but nobody seems to remember it. She should have written a note, but one can't expect an inexperienced child to think. I see nothing to do but make the rounds."

In the congestion caused by thirty thousand extra inhabitants not a carriage was to be had, so the Colonel and Will were somewhat longer than need be going to all the hotels and prominent boarding houses.

It was nearly one o'clock in the morning and the rain still pouring when the two stood forlornly at the corner of Fourth, the main artery of the town, where it intersects Jefferson. The shops were all dark, but the streets glistened in the silver and shade of arc lights.

"She is so pretty and so guileless," said the father.

"Cheer up, Colonel," said Will. "I've known her as long as you have, and she always lands on both feet."

"I'm going to the police headquarters," said the Colonel. "I hate to have my Patty figure in the papers, but I must find her."

"She's safe, I know," repeated Will, but faintly. Then suddenly grabbing the Colonel's arm he cried, "Look!"

The Colonel looked and saw on the opposite side of the street an electric car stopping to receive a passenger. A flash of light rested for an instant on an umbrella getting into the car and the umbrella was pink.

"Stop!" bawled the running pair. "Hay! Ho!" But the foot of man has yet to match the nimble heels of electricity.

It was tantalizing. At every corner the car stopped and the runners would be given a chance. Somebody cried "Thief" and policemen blew their whistles and joined the chase. At Brook a horse and wagon was hitched to a post; in a second it was appropriated by the excited pair. Will drove in front standing, while the Colonel at the back sat on something hard which broke under his weight and discharged potatoes.

"Look out, Will," panted the Colonel. "Those blank fools are throwing boulders, but so far they have only hit my legs."

A few blocks farther on the car stopped; skirts descended; an umbrella was raised and — O joy! — it was pink.

It entered a dark little cottage, but the men in the wagon had seen it and in a few seconds they were pounding on the door, bringing several frowzy heads and a fat Irishwoman to the opening.

"We wish to see the young lady who has just come in," said the dazed Colonel.

"Who has taken lodgings with you for the night," added Will.

The woman with a frightened cry slammed the door in their faces. Here a pudgy policeman, about to die with apoplexy, came up and demanded the cause of the flight and the wagon-theft. The briefly told tale met with an unbelief that exasperated the two men, but coin quieted the doubts of the law and the authority of the billy brought the woman again to the door.

"They're asking for a strange young lady, and there's none here," persisted the woman.

"There is a young lady here. She got off the electric car just now and she carried a pink umbrella," said the Colonel emphatically.

"Is this the umbrella?" asked a sleepy girl in a draggled blue gingham.

"It is," said the Colonel, "and it belongs to my daughter unless pink umbrellas are more common than I take them to be."

The woman looked scared. "I got this one at the Holt House, where I am chambermaid," said she. "One of my friends lent it to me and I am to bring it back to-morrow."

"You will have to bring it back now," said Will, "and show us the friend."

Then poor sleepy Sally was put into the wagon and soon a draggled quartette backed up to the Holt House.

It took but a short while to interview the lender of the umbrella. A porter had found it in the corner of the parlor when fixing cots for the night. Sally had begged the loan of it, promising to return it by five in the morning. He saw no harm lending it, as she was a good honest girl and had a great piece to go.

Then nothing would do but the Colonel and Will must investigate the sleepers on the parlor floor and soon they had a lot of half-dressed men rudely awakened.

Not one had seen Patty, but several told the Colonel to go to a certain place to find her.

The Colonel and his backer then announced their determination to rouse the occupants of every room in that hotel. The police restrained them, proving how needlessly alarming such a course would be and promising to set such systematic inquiry on foot that before an hour every policeman in town would possess a full description of the girl, with the large reward attached.

Then commenced a search in places — some of which would have made Patty very pink indeed had she ever known — high and low, at all points of the town, where the missing girl could possibly have been taken or strayed.

All night the two distracted men hung over the telephone in the office of the Holt House, but for them it was silent. That signature was all they had to hold by. She had been there once — she might come again.

Dawn came, bringing another day of re-union weather. Will persuaded the Colonel, who had aged ten years in the night, to take a cup of coffee and an egg. Then, from pure exhaustion, both dropped asleep in their chairs near the telephone.

At six came the barber. After paying a morning call on the barkeeper, as was his custom, he took his towels and soap to make ready for business.

The office was almost deserted. The smart drummer was pricking up his ears over a newspaper tale of millionaires; the little fat man who had slept on a slab was writing a telegram and exhaling steam; a couple of maids on wet knees were wiping up the marble floor; a row of dusky bell-boys were nodding on a bench; and the clerks behind the counter were busily writing.

Suddenly a piercing scream broke the stillness. Will and the Colonel jumped to their feet — there was something familiar about that scream. Clerks, bell-boys, maids, men and barkeeper followed the sound to the barber shop. At the door, flying straight into Will's arms, came Patty, a big swipe of lather on one cheek. She looked at Will, at her father, and uttered a glad cry. The frightened barber hurried to explain — he had mistaken her curly head for a customer.

But Patty had forgotten her terror and her sorrows. She

continued to embrace impartially Will and her father, leaving big dabs of tear-mixed lather on the coats of each. Will looked ecstatic. An embrace from this Virginia girl was as good as an "I will" before the altar. Suddenly she recovered herself, straightened up and said with dignity:

"I thought I warned you not to come."

"But willing to be compared to the fascinating Kentuckians, I have ventured to disobey you; you seem to have succumbed at first sight."

"Mr. Rogers," said she freezingly, "I have left my pink umbrella somewhere — I think in the red and white parlor — won't you be kind enough to get it for me?"

These concluding words were translated by the interpreter in the following manner:

"Alas, returned the beauteous and distressed Paté, I find myself inconsolable because of the loss of my pink umbrella. Should you find it for me in the apartment of the crimson and ivory I will, indeed, become most willingly your slave."

But the moment his lips closed on the last word the third lady pushed forward. There was a dash and breeziness about this young woman, a crimson on her cheek, a sparkle in her eye.

"I am from Chicago," the lady began, "and I am abroad because it suited me to come. Feeling sure that a little energy, not unmixed with humor, would be salutary to this court, I am an aspirant for the vacant place of Sultana. Having made myself clear I will now relate 'The Force of Circumstance' —"

The Force of Circumstance.*

BY MARY F. LEONARD.

AS Archie Carrington gave himself into the hands of the barber the cuckoo clock announced a quarter of twelve, and, in spite of his despair, he fell into a half dreaming state under the soothing manipulations, added to the fatigue of more than forty-eight hours on the railroad.

"A sultry evening, sir." The words sounded far away, and while he noted the fact he forgot to reply. Then suddenly he discovered they had been uttered by a lady who stood before him, her powdered head tilted at a saucy angle, a mocking smile on her rosy lips. As he struggled to rise she tripped away with a silken swish and flutter, down a lofty corridor, where she was presently met by a cavalier with curling locks and ruffles of lace, and joining hands the two bowed to him, the cavalier profoundly, the lady with a laughing backward glance — and he knew it was Nannette!

It was thirteen minutes to twelve when he opened his eyes. The novel he had been reading had mixed itself up with his disappointment about Nannette. Was there ever such a bewitching girl or such ill-luck as his? Just at the critical stage, when things seemed to be going his way, to be sent to Denver to take depositions!

He had but one rival — everybody acknowledged this — but John Winston was no mean one, with his bank account and the consequent favor of Nannette's grim griffin of a guardian. Still, when Archie had summoned courage to press his suit she had not laughed — Nannette usually laughed — but heard him in pensive silence, and then asked time to consider, saying one could not always follow one's heart — implying Grim Griffin's interference. After earnest entreaty she fixed the second of May as the day when she would give her answer. This was the date of a much

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advertised charity entertainment in which they were to dance as partners in the minuet, fortune in this instance seeming kind. To have to resign in John Winston's favor was the irony of fate; but he resolved, whatever happened, to be at hand to receive her answer.

But those depositions were never-ending, and when he had left just time enough to reach home, instruction came to stop over in Chicago for two days. His resolve was quickly taken. By going some hundred or so miles out of his way he could spend five hours at home — from 8 P. M. to 1 A. M. — and then take a train to Chicago at the loss of only a few hours of daylight and a considerable sum from his pocket-book.

Alas! the usual freight wreck, and he arrived dishevelled and unhappy at half-past eleven instead of eight. What could he do in an hour and a half? How find Nannette?

The theatre was still lighted, he noticed, as he was driven by on his way to the barber shop on the block above, but the lobby looked deserted. Surely the thing must be over.

The brilliantly lighted clubhouse on the opposite side of the street suggested that possibly the dancers might be having a supper together. There was a bare chance; he would try the club.

As he left the barber's chair there came a heavy roll of thunder and the sound of wind. A heavy storm was coming up, the barber said. The cuckoo clock showed five minutes to twelve. As Mr. Carrington walked toward the door the rain dashed heavily against the plate glass, and there was another peal of thunder.

Then suddenly he seemed to be dreaming again, for the door flew open and the lady of his vision entered. She wore a white cloak, but beneath it showed the satin of her petticoat and her train of blue brocade. She was not laughing now, but appeared greatly agitated. One hand covered her face, and she advanced a few steps and stood as if afraid to open her eyes.

Mr. Carrington gazed at her in silence.

When the last echo of the thunder had died away the lady uncovered her eyes, cautiously and by degrees, then — "Nannette!" "Archie!" — and the lady added, "Oh, that dreadful flash! I thought it had killed me. Do take care of me."

"Don't be frightened, dear, you are quite safe," he exclaimed in blissful bewilderment, leading her to the cane settee beside the large palm that stood in the window of the shop.

"What in the world are you doing here?" she asked, and there was severity in her tone. Then — looking around her — "Good gracious! Where am I? I thought it was a *drug store*."

"It happens to be a barber shop."

"Then I must go — I'm afraid it isn't proper. What will Uncle Edward say?" and she started up.

"But, Nannette, you can't go out into this storm." The flash which at this moment paled the electric lights was convincing, and sent her shuddering back to the cane settee. Archie drew nearer.

"What should I have done if you had not been here?" she cried. "I was driving home with Uncle Edward and he wanted something at the drug store and while he was gone there came a dreadful flash and I could't stay in the carriage and be killed, so I rushed after him, as I thought."

"The drug store is two doors below. It was fate, my darling." Archie tried to take her hand under the white cloak.

Nannette was obdurate. "Now explain *your* presence here," she commanded, employing both hands in opening her fan.

So he told his story, and she meanwhile visibly softened. And the cuckoo came out and announced the hour in his best manner, quite unnoticed.

"And now, Nannette, *dear* Nannette, give me my answer."

"In a barber shop? *Never!*"

"But consider, I leave town in an hour."

She shook her head. "Not in a barber shop," she said.

"But isn't there something about the deed sanctifying the place?"

"I think you are rather mixed."

"But you promised, Nannette."

"Have you never heard of circumstances altering cases?"

Gloomy tragedy descended upon the hero, but the presence of the comic muse might have been guessed had a pair of downcast blue eyes been visible, as was the dimple that came and went in a certain velvet cheek.

The door was flung open, and there entered a thin-visaged, gray-moustached gentleman who cried: "Good heavens, Nannette! What will you do next? Come with me at once! A barber shop!"

"But, Uncle Edward, I had to go somewhere, and the lightning dazzled me so I could not see," Nannette explained, rising. "You know Mr. Carrington, Uncle Edward? He has taken care of me."

Uncle Edward seemed inclined to deny any such knowledge, but compromised so far as to give a curt nod. "A barber shop at midnight! A pretty place for a young lady," he stormed.

"Good night, Mr. Carrington. Thank you so much for taking care of me," Nannette said sweetly over her shoulder as her uncle led her away.

The storm had passed, but clouds of gloom enveloped Mr. Carrington as he followed them to the sidewalk. Cruel Nannette!

"Oh, Mr. Carrington," she called, her hand on the carriage door, "I forgot to say that Mr. Satterlee told me you would not be back till next week and gave me your Chicago address, and I sent you that — that — information you wanted by mail this morning." The carriage rolled away.

"The *information* I wanted," Archie repeated. A drop of water from the cornice fell like an exaggerated tear upon his nose. "The information I *wanted*, ah — h!" He smiled as he took out his handkerchief and wiped it away.

The person of the fourth lady showed an elegantly slender figure, with teeth, hair and hands betraying careful attention. Even the eyes of the Sultan, offended as they were by the strange garb of these ladies, could detect a subtle difference in the cut and snugness of this person's costume.

"My father," said the lady, "a rich merchant of Manhattan, being too engrossed in his affairs to care for travel, sent me abroad in the ultimate hope that I would marry a title. Hearing of the rare opportunity open at this court I have come hither to relate 'The Story of the Golden Tresses' —"

The Golden Tresses.*

BY MRS. ATTWOOD R. MARTIN (GEORGE MADDEN MARTIN.)

IT was the most natural thing in the world that she should be in a barber shop. Where else should one go in quest of a curl? That it was midnight needs explanation.

It was all to be laid at the door of young Mrs. Roxham's father-in-law, whose door, as it happened, was directly opposite from the barber shop. Secretly, Mrs. Roxham would have given much to follow the tide of fashion that had swept on, leaving the neighborhood to renters, small shops and decadence. But his family mansion was dear to her father-in-law. So he, his widowed daughter-in-law, and Thomas Reginald continued to live facing the barber shop.

But, if Thomas Reginald was the tie binding the two, he was also the bone in possession over which parent and grandparent contended.

To his mamma he was Thomas Reginald. To his grandpapa he was Tommy. And then there were the curls. Golden curls, curls that the mamma of Thomas Reginald twined about her white fingers and laid her young cheek against. Curls that the grandfather of Tommy tweaked and vented his derision upon.

Tommy's grandparent was used to his own obstinate way. He pounded on the floor with his cane. It was one morning, as he regarded his grandson, freshly combed and curled, starting forth for kindergarten.

"He — he — looks like a sissy, and — er — a fool!" sputtered Tommy's grandparent.

Thomas Reginald's mamma drew her small self erect and walked back into the dining room.

That little episode occurred at 8.30 A. M. At a quarter before 10 P. M., Mrs. Roxham returned early from a dinner-dance, let

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herself in, sped past the library where her father-in-law spent his evenings, and on up stairs. She could not yet forgive the "sissy" as applied to Thomas Reginald.

The dinner had been stupid, and, pleading headache, Mrs. Roxham had left before the dance. No one had been there that she cared for. At this admission Mrs. Roxham, laying off her wraps, blushed. Only last night she had sent Ronald away, for how could she ask Thomas Reginald to accept a stepfather? Even one who was in some degree a cousin to Thomas Reginald and his grandfather?

Yet, in her heart, Mrs. Roxham knew she had gone to the dinner hoping Ronald would be there. But that was because she relied on Ronald for advice concerning Thomas Reginald. Even her father-in-law, in his most obstinate moments, listened to Ronald.

Though sometimes Ronald puzzled her. He had a way of seeming amused. But at what? She never could understand. And then he had such pronounced ideas about women. He was absurdly particular —

Yet, on the other hand, when she had despaired once of making herself a worthy mother to Thomas Reginald, Ronald had told her she took life too seriously.

Perhaps she did. She belonged to both a Browning and an Ibsen club.

Even her father-in-law undoubtedly favored the coming of Ronald. But no, she had sent him away — firmly, finally — three times now. She would never force a stepfather on Thomas Reginald.

At this point in her musings a wave of motherhood swept over young Mrs. Roxham. She turned swiftly and flew to hang over Thomas Reginald, deep-breathing in his little bed —

Was this — could this be — her child? She had left a golden-tressed cherub; she found a shorn and bullet-headed BOY!

His grandfather should have part in Thomas Reginald no longer. She would apply for a place in the church choir — in her father-in-law's church choir! She would take Thomas Reginald and live in one room on the salary. And sing down at her father-in-law from the choir on Sundays!

Meanwhile, she dragged Thomas Reginald up. No — not Thomas Reginald, not her child — this — this shorn Thing, with the outcropping ears! No softening, no mother-instinct of respect for infantile slumbering deterred her. This was not the baby she had gathered to herself and rocked, while the fringed lids closed upon eyes of heaven's own blue —

Heaven's own blue! She hurried Thomas Reginald, stumbling over his little gown, to the light. One of his eyes was closed. But still it was blue — deeply, darkly blue — and also black, with a fringe of green!

She shook her child into condition for explanation.

"I fit a boy," said Thomas Reginald, blinking, "what used to pull my curls."

His parent cast her most terrible threat: "What, what will your grandfather say when he hears of this?"

"He said," explained Thomas Reginald, "he said, 'Go it, Tommy!' He pounded on the pavement wif his cane."

"Pavement! Where, then, was this — this — trouble?"

"Trouble?" said Thomas Reginald, querulously. "It were a fight. I fit a boy. He run into me, comin' out the barber shop with grand'pa. A boy what uster pull my hair."

"Go," said Thomas Reginald's mother, "go back to bed."

And then she sobbed, sobbed for the circling touch of baby curls about her fingers.

Curls? Where were those curls? She fell suddenly upon the clambering Thomas and dragged him back again.

Thomas Reginald was peevish. "He tol' the man to sweep 'em up — to take 'em out in a dust pan, grand'pa did."

Thomas Reginald's mother loosed him. She walked to the window and looked over at the barber shop. She meant to have those curls. The entowelled chairs reclined empty. A man in a white jacket was opening and shutting drawers. Plate glass offered no obstruction to her view. She had watched this assistant barber before, as he trimmed Thomas Reginald's bangs and curls while the butler waited.

And now those curls had been swept into a dust pan. And dust pans lead to ash bins, and ash bins are emptied at daybreak! She wrung her hands.

She turned to the bell. To ring for the butler? He was old and peevish and would be unreasonable at this hour. And the girls were gone. Her father-in-law? She felt that she could never look upon him again. She would go herself. She had her night key. Her dark storm cloak would cover bare arms and trailing draperies. There was no time to lose.

It proved the simplest of matters to speed across the asphalt. The street was quiet and deserted, off from the avenue and hum of things.

At the shop's open door she paused. But, no doubt, barbers were quite accustomed to ladies wanting curls. She drew her small self up and went in.

There was the assistant barber in the rear. His back was turned. Should she cough? He was at the last of the long row of chairs, bending over —

Heavens! Ronald! Eyes closed, lathered brush about to de scend upon him. Ronald, who was uncompromising as regards conventions and proprieties! Ronald, who demanded that women enshrine themselves on pedestals of propriety and stay there!

Had she gasped? The assistant barber was turning. She was too far in for retreat. She slipped behind a long cheval mirror.

The assistant barber came forward and closed the door. It was heavy and shut with a clash. "These spring evenings are chilly," he remarked.

As he went back, Ronald asked him the time. Ronald's voice was penetrating and decided.

"Past ten — our hour for closing."

"You are sure he will come back past the shop?" inquired Ronald.

"It's his custom."

"His lodge usually lasts —?"

"Till about eleven," answered the assistant.

Whereupon Ronald announced that he would have a hair cut after the shave. Being after hours he would, of course — The assistant thanked him.

And while about it, it might as well be a shampoo, too.

It seemed to the little cloaked listener, crouching behind the cheval glass, now hot, now cold, as if Ronald were trying to

prolong her agony of embarrassment. If the door were not closed — If Ronald were in natural guise, even. But Ronald was toweled and in a halo of lather, and the assistant barber was there to witness — probably open-mouthed — her emerging.

The hair cut progressed but tediously. Ronald spoke again:

"You don't think it worth while looking for it — them — again, do you?"

"Can't think what he could of done with 'em. But, if you'd ruther not wait, sir, I can inquire first thing in the morning —"

No; the gentleman preferred to wait.

A nearby church bell — after an interminable period — boomed eleven. Ronald, with seeming reluctance, left the chair. There was a clink — in fact, several clinks. The assistant barber said:

"Certingly — just as lief wait as not. Might as well turn out some of the lights, though."

Then the two walked toward the cheval glass. The assistant barber was persuaded to have a cigar. They talked politics. It was as though Ronald were trying to keep the barber in a good humor.

And not four feet away a filmy handkerchief was mopping tears of weariness and despair from a face drooping against the back of a tall mirror.

The church bell boomed the quarter. At the half, the crouching figure slipped to the floor. The weary watcher began to court discovery. Oh, for courage! If only the assistant barber —

At the third quarter the assistant barber said he really must go. There was no chance of the other coming now. He would put out the rear light. The front one burned all night. Then he would be compelled to lock up. He started toward the rear of the shop.

Suddenly a sob, as of some pent-up emotion, fell on the startled ears of Mr. Ronald Alexander. Also his name — "Ronald!" It seemed quite close at hand. He gave a backward step, a start, as his eyes fell upon a half-cloaked familiar figure.

"The curls!" exclaimed the sobbing voice, and the figure stretched its white arms piteously to Mr. Ronald Alexander.

The back light went out. The front door opened. The head barber stepped in. Mr. Alexander, between the door and the figure behind the cheval mirror, waited until the head barber

was in — well in — and addressed him jocosely as an early customer. Then the front light, near the cheval glass, went out.

An arm swept the dark cloak around the little lady's white draperies. "Wait at your door," a voice whispered, and the lady found herself thrust forth into the street. A second or two later, the Welsbach flared up again. As the voice of Ronald, apologizing for a misunderstood remark about front light out and rear light dim, came floating through the open door, the cloaked figure was speeding across the asphalt.

Thomas Reginald's mamma reached her own door. Should she wait? He had mocked at Browning! He would — she knew he would — laugh at her wanting the curls. And — and — perhaps he would no longer see her on a pedestal —

She was still debating when he joined her. And when, later, she came to, as it were, she was crying against his collar. And his hands and her hands were full of curls — severed curls — but golden and precious still.

Ronald, spending the evening with her father-in-law, had heard about the curls. He had sought the barber shop for the curls, and had been shaven and shorn, waiting for them. He had been afraid that, if he waited until morning, he would not get them.

Had he known she would want the curls? Of course he had known.

Laugh at her for wanting the curls? He'd rather, any time, a woman would seek a barber shop for curls than a club for Browning. Even the head barber, in his barber's heart, had known she'd want the curls. He had put them away in his safe. All ladies, the head barber said, came the next day for the curls.

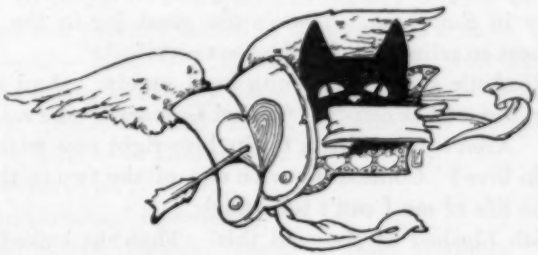
And Ronald had thought that if he — Ronald — came bearing curls — Thomas Reginald's curls — she might, perhaps, possibly, think of him — not as worthy, but as struggling to become worthy, — of being the stepfather of even Thomas Reginald.

And at that Thomas Reginald's mamma wept some more. Wept, with the knowledge, this time, that it was upon the collar of Thomas Reginald's future stepfather.

Hardly had the story-teller finished when the fifth lady,

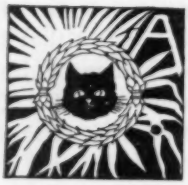
watch in hand, took up the narrative, settling her eyeglasses comfortably and wrinkling her pretty nose as she looked confidingly at the Sultan.

"I am a literary woman from Boston," said the fifth lady, "and a newspaper correspondent. I joined this party of tourists on their way through Greece, where I was making a practical study of archæology, with special reference to verifying certain questions in regard to the Olympian and Nemean games, being a member of an athletic club at home. It was indirectly due to this fact that I became acquainted with what I am convinced you will recognize as the veritable tale which I understand you desire to hear. I will, therefore, without further circumlocution proceed to narrate the story of 'Ladies' Night'—"



Ladies' Night.*

BY ALICE CALDWELL HEGAN.



AS Miss Ethel Corcoran stood before the mirror in her dressing-room pulling on her long gloves, there was ample justification for the satisfied smile that lurked between her dimples. Miss Corcoran was young, beautiful and confident. In fact, she was so sure of herself that she made every one else sure of her, too. Her little cousin, waiting for a final peep into the mirror, was no exception to the rule.

"If I were one of the many men in love with you, Ethel, you'd challenge me to win you to-night. And you shouldn't say me nay, either."

Miss Corcoran, quite satisfied with both this and the mirror's confession, turned and kissed her cousin:

"But, my lady Bess, I would say you nay; I'm not to be won thus early in the game. There's too great joy in the sport and the conquest to relinquish freedom yet awhile."

But Elizabeth shook her young head sagely. And she shook her finger, too, at her cousin. "Ethel Corcoran," she said, "that's assumed. Aren't you a little bit in love right now with the idea of being in love? Confess it's with one of the two in the library, but for the life of me I can't tell which."

Elizabeth blushed as she said this. Then she looked at Ethel. Was it wistfully? But Bess was such a little baby thing, she looked wistful without trying.

"They're both awfully fond of me," admitted Miss Corcoran, too engrossed with her carriage slippers to see the shadow that came into Bess's face at this, "but do you know, honestly, I can't tell which I like the better. Tom is so — er — big and splendid, but then, Ernest has a career before him. And it's so fascinating the

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way Ernest drops his chin, and looks at you squarely through his eyeglasses, looks you through, too. They're both — oh — well, I guess they'll keep.

Elizabeth looked shocked and reproachful at her cousin's flippancy. But, then, Miss Wingate had all the responsibility of feeling herself a conscience for the conscienceless Ethel.

"But they won't keep. They are not the kind to be put off, and you will have to come to a decision pretty soon. I'll bet you can't keep them from proposing until you go for your trip East next month. I'll bet you are engaged to one of them before Valentine's Day."

"And I'll bet you five pounds of chocolates I'm not. I won't let them get that near the point."

"But if they do," persisted Bess.

"I'll decline any proposal from whomsoever proposes between now and Valentine's Day, Miss Elizabeth Wingate, five pounds the forfeit — provided you do the same."

But Bess looked disconcerted. The pause was so significant that Miss Corcoran, about to go down, turned and began to laugh.

"So, my young lady? So there is some one you wouldn't pledge yourself to refuse? You quiet, demure-eyed piece of deception! Is it some one you left behind in the country, or is — "

"No — no — Ethel — " Elizabeth's cheeks were crimson. "I never had a proposal in my life — "

"Then, promise," said Ethel, naughtily — "promise, or I'll suspect — Tom — or Ernest — or — "

"No — oh — no!"

"Then promise," mercilessly.

"I can safely promise," declared Bess, rallying, "for there's nobody to want to propose to me." And with cheeks still blazing, Bess, usually the follower, fled ahead down the stairs, while naughty, confident Ethel, laughing, followed after, to the two men waiting in the library.

. . . . . .

On the thirteenth of February the Nemean Athletic Club gave a public exhibition that was, like everything connected with that exclusive organization, brilliant and fashionable. It was the first time that its new building had been thrown open to the public, and

the feminine public, in charming array, had largely responded to the invitations to this special "Ladies' Night." There were music, lights, beauty, chatter, laughter. Mr. Tommie White, whose six feet two of athletic solidity was as nothing in strength compared to the strong attachment of his friends to the diminutive form of his name, was showing Miss Corcoran and Miss Wingate, together with their chaperon, about the building. In this office Dr. Ernest Hardin was assisting Mr. Tommie White.

"You see," said Mr. White, "it's all here: gymnasium, pool, dressing-room, barber shop, kitchen, billiards — completest sort of arrangement — "

Miss Corcoran lingered behind with Dr. Hardin. Impersonal enthusiasm always struck her as a waste of good material. She had been avoiding tête-à-têtes, as a rule, of late, anyhow, and so found herself tired of the tameness of life in threes and groups. But Bessie's statements had had weight. Miss Corcoran had avoided tête-à-têtes because they lead to opportunity, and opportunity to confession. And Miss Corcoran was not sure to whom she wanted to say "no."

So, while Mr. Tommie White eulogized the completeness of the clubhouse, Miss Corcoran concluded to drop behind with the Doctor. "Do you mind waiting while I think of some new adjective to respond to Tom's demands? I've exhausted my ordinary supply."

"If you'll promise not to think so hard you can't listen," said the Doctor, stopping short. "Sit down, please." The Doctor was a masterful man.

Miss Corcoran dropped on the cushions of the cosey window-seat. The Doctor, sitting down too, leaned forward, dropped his chin and studied her through his eyeglasses. Miss Corcoran lifted her lashes, lowered them quickly and used her fan.

"I don't know why I always obey you," she said.

The Doctor laughed. "Up to your old tricks, my Duchess," he returned. "You ought to write a treatise on 'Jollying as a Fine Art.'"

Miss Corcoran looked reproach. "Is it fair, Dr. Hardin, to set me down as always flippant and superficial and insincere?" Did Miss Corcoran's voice tremble?

"No," answered the Doctor, "I set you down as nothing of the kind. Ethel — Miss Corcoran — I know that underneath all is a frank, womanly heart, and to prove it I brought you here to tell you something — to ask you to listen while I tell — there is a long question mark in my mind that wants to be changed into a period."

Miss Corcoran glanced up quickly. The Doctor's voice rang with suppressed feeling. This was real. But when she didn't know her own mind — she did not propose having it come to an issue — she really didn't believe she wanted to refuse Dr. Hardin.

"I never knew much about punctuation," she declared, rising. "Ask Bess; she has taught school. Where are they, anyhow?"

The Doctor rose too. "We'll find them and I'll ask her," said he.

The exhibition of Nemean Club skill that followed was remarkably clever — fencing, high-jumping, sparring, exercise on the parallel bars succeeded one another. But Miss Corcoran saw little of it. She was absorbed in the revelation by the Doctor. Despite her assurance with Bess she had been uncertain about him. And now he had succumbed. Dear man! With his fascinating way of telling you the blunt truth. There he was on the stage now, just disappearing into a mysterious chintz cabinet and Tom White following. They were the brag athletes of the club, these two, but Tom a giant compared with the Doctor's slighter build.

What was it all about, this chintz cabinet? And the elaborate binding and fettering of Tom and the Doctor with stout ropes? Even so were they both confessedly bound in the fetters of *her* enchantment. But she had to set one free! What a pity men must bring things to an issue! She couldn't say which she preferred. Tom, so large and splendid — the Doctor so — er — compelling. As the lights were lowered Miss Corcoran was gazing at her finger tips.

What was all this? Music, banjo playing, tambourines, waving hands issuing from the chintz cabinet! She hadn't paid attention. What was it all about? Tom and the Doctor bound in fetters of her forging while the muses made the air sweet? Occasionally Miss Corcoran had these moments of fanciful playfulness. The lights flared up. The cabinet was empty. Bonds and fetters

derided. Tom and the Doctor had slipped their bonds. Miss Corcoran laughed ruefully. It was on her — the laugh. Figures of speech are dangerous in these prosaic days. The lights went out — again music, tambourine playing, etc. — Were Tom and the Doctor celebrating their escape?

Lights on again. Tom and the Doctor sitting within the cabinet, bound hand and foot. They had returned, then, voluntarily. Miss Corcoran felt better. She studied her gloved finger-tips again and smiled. But which of the two did she wish to keep in her fetters?

The programme was lengthy. The lights faded again, this time for the final tableau. "I'll be glad when it's over," said Miss Corcoran to herself. "I am afraid this is a case where a dark room is the last place to develop a negative."

But when the light came in a broad white stream behind her, it revealed a picture that seemed to decide her. On the stage, in bold relief against a black background, posing as the Dying Gaul of the Capitoline Museum at Rome, was Tom White, his massive shoulders, his perfect proportions, his motionless position turned to marble by white fleshings, rice powder and calcium lights.

Murmurs of delight were heard on all sides, followed by a storm of applause.

"Isn't he superb?" cried Elizabeth, turning to Ethel with shining eyes.

But Miss Corcoran could not answer. After all, it was Tom White — the most fascinating man she had ever met — and how devoted he had been last winter. There was not a girl in town but had envied her. It would be easy enough to smile him back again — to-morrow — for that wager must be won. If he returned to the old question to-night? — but she must not let him.

Then the lights were turned on full, and in the confusion that followed, Ethel, surrounded by friends, became separated from Elizabeth and her chaperon. Her eyes danced with excitement and her high spirits were so infectious that every man in the room turned to watch her as she passed.

"I believe I'm bewitched," she thought, and she held a rose to her lips to hide her smiling. "In such a mood, I must not be alone five minutes with either Tom or Ernest — I might accept the first one that asks me."

Even as the thought flashed she saw Tom White making his way through the crowd. He had taken a velvet cloak from one of the cavaliers of the tableaux and had thrown it jauntily over his gladiator shoulders. Miss Corcoran thought he was seeking her, when the fact was he was making a bee-line for the dressing-room to get rid of powder from face and hair. She hastily excused herself to an admiring bore and began to seek her chaperon.

In and out of the crowd she looked, but in vain. When she reached the stage end of the room she stood on the steps for a better view. As she looked she saw Tom White's back not two yards away. In dismay she fled precipitately behind some palms through a short corridor into a dimly lighted room, slipping into the shadow behind the door until he should pass. A long line of mirrors ran on each side of the wall, and big, comfortable chairs at regular intervals solemnly contemplated their stuffed images. In the centre of the room, where it had been hastily thrust after the performance, was the chintz cabinet.

Mr. White entered unsuspectingly and had just turned on the light above a wash-stand when he saw in a mirror a familiar figure disappearing behind the folds of the chintz curtains.

He ran to the cabinet. "Ethel," he called, softly," you witch! What are you doing here?" and pulling aside the curtains he saw a pretty picture laughing at him from the background of bright-hued stuff.

"What made you follow?" asked she. "This is the first time I have ever had a chance to study the spiritual side of anything — I was dying to see the inside of this cabinet."

"You knew I was coming, and hid," said Tom.

"Why should I hide?" asked she, with innocent eyes.

"I don't know why, but you did. Ethel, have I pursued you so in the past that you have to run from me?"

She shook her head violently. She, Ethel Corcoran, for once, was not quite mistress of herself. Tom looked so handsome, with a hand on each curtain, holding her a prisoner.

"I have been trying to see you for a month," went on Tom, "but for some reason you seemed to avoid me. You see I had something to say to you."

So it was coming. The old love which she had been assured a

year ago had been safely diverted into a platonic channel had sought its old course. What should she say? She could not break the boy's heart again. In this new excitement Ernest Hardin, with his quiet, insistent manner, was forgotten.

"You see, Ethel," said Tom, more serious than she had ever known him to be, "you and I have grown up together. It was the most natural thing in the world that I should fall in love with you. You told me all along that love was not as serious a thing with me then as it would be some day, and you were right."

Miss Corcoran looked about for some way of escape. It was going to be painful — it was almost tragic — for Tom. She hated scenes.

"The fact is, Ethel," he began after an awkward pause — then he broke into a low laugh. "Oh, it's no use trying to explain! Just put your little hand in mine and congratulate me, for I am engaged to the finest girl that ever lived — in Cleveland. She is the truest, most straightforward, affectionate woman, and she will make me a better man."

"Hush!" said Miss Corcoran. "Come inside, quick! There is somebody at the door."

"Just a minute — please do." They both recognized Hardin's voice and waited in silence for him to pass on, but he and his companion had evidently stopped right in front of the door.

"Now, answer, truly," continued the young Doctor. "You have tried to avoid me of late. Why?"

The answer was inaudible.

"I thought so," he went on. "Had it not been for Miss Ethel I should not have brought you here. I think she gave me a little hint that I might presume —"

("What can he be talking about?" thought Ethel.)

Again the answer was not audible, but the Doctor said, eagerly:

"Then you do care? You love me?"

Tom White started forward from the cabinet, but Ethel laid a restraining hand on his arm and whispered hoarsely:

"What would they think of us — in a barber shop — at this hour!"

The Doctor's voice again reached them, first persuasive, then indignant:

"But if you love me you'll marry me! What possible reason can you have for refusing?"

"Not to-night — I'll answer you in the morning," said a trembling voice. ("It's Bess," whispered Ethel in the cabinet.)

"But why not to-night? Why won't you answer now?"

"Because," answered Bess — "Oh, don't make me tell — because I have already promised — "

"Good Lord!" exclaimed the Doctor, "and I thought — "

But here Miss Corcoran made a whirling exit from the curtains and rushed upon the scene:

"Elizabeth Wingate, you are perfectly insane!" she cried, to the startled pair. "The idea of being conscientious over that old wager! Besides, you are free now, for, listen — the clocks are striking twelve. Come out, Tom."

The Dying Gaul emerged from the chintz cabinet.

Covered with confusion as she was, Bess had breath enough to gasp: "Oh, Ethel! You didn't refuse?"

"No," said Miss Corcoran, laughing the most charming laugh in the world — the laugh that comes at one's expense — "No, Elizabeth Wingate, you have won the bet. You refused, but I haven't refused a single offer for the past month — only because I haven't had one."

As the Boston lady concluded her story the other ladies arose and she added:

"Four of us will, of course, leave Stamboul with our personally conducted party. The fifth, as relater of the story that best pleases your highness, will remain as successor to the ill-fated Scheherazade II. We are stopping at the hotel over the way. As the palace has telephone connection you will have no trouble in calling us up to report your decision. In the meantime, I will hold back my copy that the name of the successful one may be inserted before cabling to America. A speedy decision is urgently requested."

At this point, gathering up satchels and umbrellas, with charming bows and smiles and words the ladies were about to depart, but at a sign from the Sultan they remained.

A hush of expectancy fell upon the court. Then the Sultan spoke:

"To her that hath beauty, say that beauty is but a fashion;

"To her that hath truth, that truth hath often a sharp tongue;

"To her that hath grace, that it belongs but to youth;

"To her that hath brain, that she dwelleth too high;

"But with her that hath a loving heart a man may live in peace.

"She of the loving heart hath told the story. Do thou, O Vizier, acquaint her with this decision and send the others away."

When he had spoken these words the Sultan retired to an inner room with his attendants.

Then did the Grand Vizier beat his breast and feel the back of his neck, exclaiming:

"Heaven preserve us from our evil genius! Which of the five is she of the Loving Heart?"

The Gargoyle Room.*

BY ANNA McCLURE SHOLL.

N the spring I received a letter from a London firm of lawyers informing me that by the death of my great-uncle, William Courtright, I had become possessor of his property, consisting of several thousand pounds and an ancient house, near Canterbury.

On the voyage over, I had leisure to arrange into some semblance of personality the slight knowledge I possessed of my deceased relative. In our family circle he had always been spoken of with a curious mixture of awe and distrust, as of some one far removed from everyday folk by his habits of life and thought. I knew that in his youth he had studied architecture, law and chemistry, but had adopted no profession, a restless and insatiable intellect impelling him always onward to new fields of knowledge. On the death of his father he invested his share of the patrimony to advantage and left the United States, never to return. That had been forty years ago. During his long self-exile he travelled extensively in Europe and Asia; and, at last, purchased a house in the south of England, which he filled with the strange curiosities and bizarre bric-à-brac collected in his travels. In this house he had died.

When I passed for the first time across its threshold, and stood in the broad, low-roofed hall, filled with an indescribable jumble of tapestries, Indian brasses, old china, ecclesiastical vessels, altar hangings, bridal chests and what not, I had the sensation of being in the presence of my uncle himself. The moral atmosphere of houses is sometimes as subtle and penetrative as that surrounding an impressive personality. The spirit of William Courtright had found expression and embodiment in the strange furnishings of this sixteenth century dwelling.

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"A kind of modern Faust," I reflected, as the silent housekeeper, an inheritance with the house, led me from room to room with stony impassiveness, as if she herself were but a bit of ancient bric-à-brac come to life.

"This is a fine bed-room. I will use this while I am here."

We were standing in the centre of a large room which seemed of later date than the rest of the house, its vaulted roof and pointed windows being of the pseudo-Gothic of the eighteenth century. Like the other rooms, it contained bric-à-brac and art-treasures, but more sparsely placed. The height of the ceiling and the views from the lofty windows commended it to me as an airy and pleasant bed-chamber.

"This was Mr. Courtright's room, sir. If I may be so bold as to suggest, sir, I would say that the blue bed-chamber is to be preferred. It has the sun and the view of the Cathedral."

I was astonished to discern a quaver of anxiety in the woman's voice. What possible difference could it make to her which room I took? I turned and looked directly at her. The stony mask had dropped from her face. Anxiety and pleading were in her dim eyes.

"But this room is pleasant," I said. "I prefer it."

"Very well, sir." Her voice was resigned.

As I was turning to the door the sun, which through the morning had been obscured by heavy clouds, burst forth, revealing every part of the room with distinctness. Then I noticed for the first time a horrible object — a large stone gargoyle, the size, indeed, of a dwarf, fastened high on the wall above the fire-place. No stone monster on the balustrade of Nôtre Dame, where mediæval fancy has taken its most grotesque shapes, could compare with it for hideousness. The knees were drawn up to the humped breast, as if in a spasm of pain; the preternaturally long arms were wrapped about the knees; the crooked shoulders were drawn convulsively forward. But it was the face that focused the horror of the figure. The great nose and ears, the shapeless, gaping mouth, the receding forehead, would in themselves have been revolting. Contorted as they were with an expression of the intensest malignity and hate, they seemed capable of inspiring a kind of nightmare terror. I at once associated the gargoyle with the housekeeper's protest against my occupying this particular room.

"That's a pretty piece of bric-à-brac!" I said, going towards the fireplace. "Where did your master pick up such a horror?"

The woman had grown strangely pale.

"I don't — don't know, sir," she stammered, and then, as if she found relief in words, she went on quickly, "It's an awful thing. When you're in the room it makes you look at it. It follows you with its stare, with its curse, I say. Master would never have it taken down. He looked at it when he was dying — when he was dead. The stone man and the dead man stared at each other till I closed his eyes."

She was trembling violently, and stealing furtive glances at the figure as she spoke.

Taking no notice of her agitation I drew a chair to the fireplace, and stood upon it to examine the figure closer. It seemed carved of granite. In certain details it was unlike any gargoyle I had ever seen on the cathedrals of the Continent, being clothed in a kind of shirt, and possessing a semblance of rough thick hair. I thought of the dwarf Quasimodo, as I touched the stone features gingerly. They were death-like in their peculiar coldness.

"I should like to know what cathedral this monster was taken from," I said.

"Here is a list of the things in this room; perhaps it will tell."

She handed me a little leather-bound book. An inventory was written on the first pages in a delicate crabbed hand, as of a scholar with gout.

I ran my eye down the list. This room evidently contained the chief treasures of my uncle's collection:

Madonna, by Murillo.
Crucifix — Veit Stoss.
Faïence Candlestick — Henri Deux Ware.
Madonna, by Piero della Francesca.
St. John, by Pinturricchio.
Inlaid spinet, by Martin Pacher.
Indian brasses.
Gargoyle from French Cathedral.

"Yes, but what cathedral?" I questioned mentally. "It would not be easy to rob a cathedral of one of its gargoyles; and there is none in process of demolition offering its carvings to antiquity dealers! Perhaps in process of restoration — an obscure part — a good bribe? No, hardly possible."

The figure of the gargoyle haunted me, even in the full, warm June light which flooded the ancient garden where I walked after my early dinner. I had an impulse to go in and examine the figure more closely, but I was curiously averse to handling it. There was something uncanny in its coldness. That night I went early to my room, intending to read in bed, as was my habit. But I could not fix my mind upon the book, a French novel, a mere bit of puff-paste with sugar ornaments. My eyes would wander to the fearful image above the fireplace. It seemed more alive, more real than the Parisians of the tale, its passion more potent for evil. I blew out the candle to hide its stare, and soon fell asleep.

I awoke in a cold sweat, and with a horrible oppression. The room was flooded with moonlight, and I turned my eyes involuntarily to the gargoyle. Its lips seemed to be moving, as if it were struggling to speak. I had an insane notion that the thing might come crawling down from its place like an monstrous speckled gray spider. I lit a candle hurriedly, my hand shaking with a sickening fear, of which I was mortally ashamed. Then, rising, I drew a chair before the fireplace, and standing on it forced myself to examine the gargoyle closely. I found that it was fastened to the wall by a cement as hard as granite. There was no possibility of removing it. A strange coldness seemed to radiate from the figure, as if it were of ice. I went shuddering back to bed, and thought of the man who had lain there, his dead eyes fixed upon the eyes of the image.

A week of restless nights induced me to change my bedroom. There was no use reasoning with myself. The hideous figure crowded the place with its presence. I felt as if I should lose my breath under that incubus.

The housekeeper asked no questions, but her relief was visible.

On the day that I moved into the blue bed-chamber I wrote to my lawyers in London, asking them if they knew of any full inventory of my late uncle's art-treasures, one which not only catalogued them, but described the means of their acquisition. In reply I received a sealed packet bearing the address "To my Heir." The accompanying letter stated that my uncle had made this catalogue only a month before his death, but had instructed his lawyers not to deliver it "unless my great-nephew proves his

interest in art-objects by asking for such a catalogue." In the event of my not asking for it, they had instructions to burn it after the lapse of a certain period of time.

I opened the packet with a strange conviction that it was more than a mere catalogue. I recognized at once the clear but crabbed handwriting, the same which appeared in the inventory of the "gargoyle room," as I now called it.

The catalogue proved no catalogue after all, but a letter from my uncle to me.

"Dear Nephew, whom I shall never see," it began, "I am soon to die. Why should one go to one's grave bearing the full burden of one's secrets? I am not a believer. I cannot make my confession to any priest. I make it now to you. Yet you may never see this paper. You are to see it only under condition of making a request which you may never make. Yet your interest in the gargoyle — "

I put down the letter, trembling as if with a sudden chill. Why should he fix upon the gargoyle of all his treasures as the one most likely to arouse my curiosity? I hardly dared read on.

"Your interest in the gargoyle may lead you to make inquiries concerning its history. I alone can tell you what it is.

"When I returned from the Continent to England after many years of travel, and established myself in this house, I brought with me a strange creature, a horrible Quasimodo of a dwarf, whom I had saved one day in Padua from the attack of a mob who believed he had stolen a child. 'Here,' I thought, 'is a gargoyle come to life. I will add him to my curiosities.' The monster attached himself to me with dog-like fidelity, and I made of him a kind of fetch-and-carry servant. In the course of our relationship I found that at times he was sullen and malignant, and needed close watching, but I never feared him. His sullen fits were always followed by expressions of violent attachment to my person.

"We had been in this house six months when what I am about to relate took place. By 'we' I mean the gargoyle and the old housekeeper, whom you will find when you come to take possession. She was horribly afraid of the dwarf, and I kept him out of her sight as much as possible. I don't think she ever allowed

herself a good look at him. I never allowed him to go outside the garden walls lest he should frighten women and children.

"Then came a bad night. The dwarf had been sullen; had twice refused to do my bidding. I was in my chair tormented with gout, and at his third refusal to obey me, accompanied by muttered words of insolence, I reached out my crutch and struck him a heavy blow, heavier than I intended. He fell to the floor and lay there squirming like a hurt spider, and all the time looking up at me with a horrible, malignant stare that maddened me. I dealt him another blow. Then he was quite still.

"I lost all sense of pain then. I could walk and even go to the side of the thing where it lay on the floor. I had made myself a murderer — for that carcass!

"What was to be done? I could not hang for such a paltry life. I could not rid myself of the body. I resolved to conceal my crime by revealing it. In my youth I had become familiar with a method of embalming which turns the body, by a kind of petrifying process, into a hard, dense substance. This I employed upon the body of the dwarf, afterwards coating it with a thin layer of cement, which when dry has the consistency of granite. Then I affixed this strange gargoyle to the wall.

"I told my housekeeper that I had sent my dwarf back to Italy. Her relief was great. I kept my new art-treasure covered, as I did many of the other objects in the room, so she suspected nothing. After many years I showed her one day my 'gargoyle from a French cathedral.' The horror in her face, still remembered, compels me to this confession. I trust you to be as faithful in guarding my secret as she has been."

Your Last Day

is

Feb. 26

for telling a short story that will win

$100

$500

$1,000

or

$2,100

To the man or woman who has a clever story to tell the chance of a lifetime is presented by the contest of The Black Cat which closes February 26.

The prizes are the richest ever offered, ranging from $100 to $2,100. As name or fame of a writer counts for nothing with The Black Cat, the unknown have an equal chance with the well-known — merit alone governs, and stories unsuccessful in the contest, but available, will be purchased.

Read the list of prizes and conditions on the following two pages and let us mail you our free booklet, which contains profitable hints to writers and gives the names and addresses of men and women in all parts of America for whom The Black Cat has blazed the path of profit.

Remember the contest closes February 26.

The Shortstory Publishing Company, Boston, Mass.

BELOW is a list of the prizes. The capital prize--first-class tour of the world ticket--will be delivered to the winner with check covering expenses to Boston and return. The same applies to the 6th and 17th prizes. All cash prizes will be paid by certified check on The International Trust Company, of Boston. The Automobile, Piano, Angelus and Typewriters will be delivered, freight prepaid, at any railway station. If preferred, prizes Nos. 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 17, 23 or 24 may be converted into their cash equivalent, less the guarantee already paid to secure their delivery.

Total Prizes $10,285

1st.	Tour of The World, 179 days,	Actual Cost	$2,100
2d.	Surrey Automobile	Actual Cost	1,300
3d.	Cash		1,000
4th.	Cash		500
5th.	Crown Piano,	Actual Cost	500
6th.	Round Trip, Boston to San Francisco,		350
7th.	Cash		300
8th.	Cash		300
9th.	Angelus,	Actual Cost	250
10th.	Cash		200
11th.	Cash		200
12th.	Cash		200
13th to 16th.	Four Cash Prizes at $150 each		600
17th.	Round Trip, Boston to Cuba,		150
18th.	Cash		125
19th.	Cash		125
20th.	Cash		125
21st.	Cash		125
22d.	Cash		125
23d.	Fox Typewriter,	Actual Cost	110
24th.	Oliver Typewriter,		100
25th to 39th.	15 Cash Prizes at $100 each		1,500

COMPETITORS may choose their own themes. We especially desire, however, stories in which the morbid, unnatural and unpleasant are avoided rather than emphasized. Good, clean, humorous tales are desirable. No dialect stories, translations, plays or poems will be considered; nor any story not submitted strictly in accordance with the conditions. We want original stories, out of the ordinary, free from commonplace and padding, and interesting throughout.

Conditions:

1. Each manuscript must bear at the top of the first page the writer's real name and address, in full (if it is desired that the story be published under a pen name that must likewise be given), as also the number of words it contains, which may range from 1,500 to 6,000, but must not exceed the latter. Other things being equal, the shorter of two stories will be preferred.

2. Manuscripts must be plainly written (with typewriter or pen) on one side of paper only, on sheets not larger than 8 x 11 inches, must be sent unrolled, *postage or express charges fully prepaid*, and accompanied by addressed and stamped envelopes for return. Letters advising submittal of stories must be *enclosed with manuscripts*, not sent separately. Manuscripts will be received and returned only at writers' risk. Upon our payment for a story the author relinquishes to us all rights thereto of whatsoever nature.

3. Every story must be strictly original and must, neither wholly nor in part, have appeared in print in any language. Every story will be judged solely on its own merits; the name or fame of a writer will carry absolutely no weight. And furthermore, every story will be valued, not in accordance with its length, but with its worth as a story.

4. With every manuscript there must be enclosed, in the same envelope, one yearly subscription to THE BLACK CAT, together with 50 cents to pay therefor. On subscriptions to foreign countries 24 cents must be added for postage. All money should be sent by draft, postal money order, express money order or registered letter. One- or two-cent postage stamps in perfect condition will also be accepted. If competitors are already subscribers to THE BLACK CAT or submit more than one manuscript, their existing subscriptions will, if desired, be extended or the new ones may be taken in the names of other parties. Any competitor may send as many stories as desired, but with each story all conditions must be complied with.

5. All envelopes containing manuscripts as above must be plainly marked "For Competition" and addressed, "The Shortstory Publishing Company, 144 High Street, Boston, Mass." Their receipt will be acknowledged.

6. The competition will close February 26, 1902. The awards will be paid within 60 days thereafter, and announced in the earliest possible issue of THE BLACK CAT. Should two stories of equal merit be considered worthy of a prize, the prize will be either doubled or divided.

7. For stories unsuccessful in the competition but deemed desirable, we will either award special prizes, of not less than $100 each, or make a cash offer. All unsuccessful manuscripts, submitted as above, will be returned after the contest has closed. The conditions and requirements being here fully set forth, we cannot enter into correspondence relative thereto.

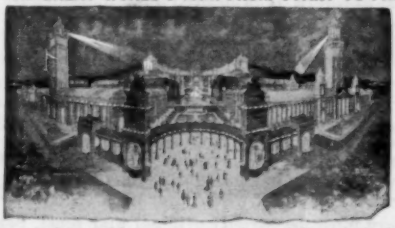
Important. *As no story will be considered unless all the above conditions are complied with, competitors should make sure that their manuscripts are prepared strictly in accordance therewith, are securely sealed in strong envelopes, and fully prepaid. Don't hold your story till the latest moment, but send it as soon as ready, thus facilitating earliest possible decision.*

The Shortstory Publishing Company, Boston, Mass.

A Whole Year for 10 Cts.

The greatest World's Fair the world has ever seen will be held in St. Louis, Mo., 1903. Over $30,000,000 has been raised for it. Thousands of men are at work preparing "Forest Park," the most beautiful park in the West, for the Fair. THE WINNER MAGAZINE, the largest and most beautifully illustrated monthly magazine in the West, now having **OVER 500,000 PAID SUBSCRIBERS,** is now illustrating the building of the Great Fair from start to finish by photography, and will contain, in addition to its great stories and special departments, over

150 FULL AND DOUBLE PAGE ENGRAVINGS
OF THE GREAT WORLD'S FAIR FROM START TO FINISH



In the next twelve numbers, most of them full and double pages, 19 x 12 inches in size. Each number of THE WINNER MAGAZINE contains, besides, from FOUR to SIX SPLENDIDLY ILLUSTRATED STORIES, 96 COLUMNS OF DEPARTMENTS IN FANCY WORK, FLORICULTURE, HOME STUDY, ETC. BEAUTIFULLY PRINTED, BEAUTIFULLY ILLUSTRATED, THE BEST FAMILY MAGAZINE PUBLISHED. Each copy of THE WINNER MAGAZINE is worth more than the cost of the whole year's subscription.

As a special inducement to double the subscription of THE WINNER MAGAZINE, and make it the largest magazine in the world in point of circulation, you can have THE WINNER sent to your address every month for a whole year, by sending the small sum of

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with Wizard Cards. Future **truthfully** revealed. To **convince** you will send cards **Free** for stamp
C. Velaro, 208 W. 42d St., New York.

MAKE MONEY QUICKLY
BY SELLING OUR JEWELRY
WHOLE OUTFIT **FREE.**
SEND NAME AND ADDRESS AND WE WILL SEND YOU PREPAID
THOMAS NOVELTY CO SUCCESSORS TO THE PROVIDENCE SPECIALTY CO. PASCO, WASH.

FAT

How to reduce it

Mr. Hugo Horn, 344 E. 65th St., New York City, writes: "It reduced my weight 40 lbs. three years ago, and I have not gained an ounce since." Purely vegetable, and harmless as water. Any one can make it at home at little expense. No starving. No sickness. We will mail a box of it and full particulars in a plain sealed package for 4 cents for postage, etc.

Hall Chemical Co.,
Dept K A, ST. LOUIS, MO.

Marvelous Growth of Hair.

A Famous Doctor-Chemist Has Discovered a Compound That Grows Hair on a Bald Head in a Single Night.

Startling Announcement Causes Doctors to Marvel and Stand Dumbfounded at the Wonderful Cures.

The Discoverer Sends Free Trial Packages to All Who Write.

After half a century spent in the laboratory, crowned with high honors for his many world-famous discoveries the celebrated physician-

MISS HISLOP, of New Zealand and Her Marvelous Growth of Hair.

chemist at the head of the great Altenheim Medical Dispensary, 5415 Butterfield Bldg., Cincinnati, Ohio, has just made the startling announcement that he has produced a compound that grows hair on any bald head. The doctor makes the claim that after experiments, taking years to complete, he has at last reached the goal of his ambition. To the doctor all heads are alike. There are none which cannot be cured by this remarkable remedy. The record of the cures already made is truly marvelous and were it not for the high standing of the great physician and the convincing testimony of thousands of citizens all over the country it would seem too miraculous to be true.

There can be no doubt of the doctor's earnestness in making his claims nor can his cures be disputed. He does not ask any man, woman or child to take his or any one else's word for it but he stands ready and willing to send free trial packages of this great hair restorative to any one who writes to him for it, enclosing a 2 cent stamp to prepay postage. In a single night it has started hair to growing on heads bald for years. It has stopped falling hair in one hour. It never fails no matter what the condition, age or sex. Old men and young men, women and children all have profited by the free use of this great new discovery. Write today if you are bald, if your hair is falling out or if your hair, eyebrows or eyelashes are thin or short and in a short time you will be entirely restored.

Cream of Chocolate

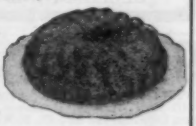
PURE

TRADE MARK.

The $555 Prize Recipes

FIRST PRIZE, $100.00. Won by Mrs. Louis Davis of Raritan, N. J.

Cream of Chocolate Cake.



"Economical and delicious."—The winner. "Excellent and original."—The judges. "Worth the money."—This we say.

SECOND PRIZE, $50.00. Cream of Chocolate Candy. My recipe is so very simple I hesitated to send it, but concluded at the last moment to do so. It is meant for children's use, when they come pleading to be allowed to "make some candy," and you decline because it is so much bother to have the "muss" of sugar, butter, molasses and other odds and ends around. Mine are satisfied now if they may make what they call

Cream of Chocolate Candy

Recipe by Mrs. Edith F. Peters, 55 Freeport Street, Dorchester, Mass. "Good; all right," the judges say. The simplest thing imaginable. Possible only with Cream of Chocolate. This we say.

THIRD PRIZE, $50.00. Won by Henry Cleveland Wood, Harrodsburg, Ky. **Nectar Chocolate.** "It is a drink fit for the gods."—The winner. "Best beverage."—The judges. We wish every trained nurse in the country knew of this recipe. This we say.

There were sixty prize-winners and many good recipes left over. They will all be given in full in our recipe book, now in press. Sent free to any address.

½-lb. can to any address by mail, 30 cts. 5-lb. can by express, paid, $1.97, post-office order.

L. A. ROBERTS & CO.

72 Main St., Danvers, Mass.

The WOODEN HEN

A high-class self-regulating incubator on a small scale. Fifty egg capacity. Heat, moisture and ventilation automatically and perfectly controlled. Price only $6.80.

Send for the **Wooden Hen Book**; mailed free, together with a book about the **EXCELSIOR INCUBATOR**, to those who name this paper.

GEO. H. STAHL, Quincy, Illinois.

CANCER CURED

WITH SOOTHING, BALMY OILS.

Cancer, Tumor, Catarrh, Piles, Fistula, Ulcers and all Skin and Female Diseases. Write for Illustrated Book. Sent free. **DR. W. O. BYE, Kansas City, Mo.**

EyesightSaved!

Send for FREE Booklet on Eye Diseases, their Prevention and Cure with Testimonials.

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In various cities and towns showing the above display, acting as our direct agents, are authorized to refund the money on every package that does not satisfy the consumer in results.

ESCULETTS ARE EATEN LIKE CANDY.

Not a Physic. No local treatment required. Pleasant and absolutely harmless, yet relieve PILES, VARICOCELE or enlarged veins quickly; Curing permanently. Ask your local dealer or enclose 26 two-cent stamps to.

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TELL YOUR FRIENDS

$5 FOR AN INCUBATOR.

It holds 50 eggs and is equal to any incubator made for hatching. Costs less because it's smaller. **THE 50 EGG BANTLING SPECIAL** is guaranteed as to results, if you follow instructions. **20th Century Poultry Book** explains all. Sent for ten cents. Write for it at once.

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POULTRY PAPER, illus'd, 20 pages, 25 cts. per year, 4 months trial 10 cts. *Sample Free.* 64-page practical poultry book free to yearly subscribers. Book alone 10 cts. **Catalogue** of poultry books free. *Poultry Advocate*, Syracuse, N. Y.

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the same old way when our new plan beats it 10 times. 100 Egg Hatcher Costs Only $2. Over 94,000 in use. 1000's test'ls. 5000 agents wanted for 1902, either sex. Pleasant work. Big profits. Catalog and 10c Egg Formula FREE if you write today. **Natural Hen Incubator Co., B 162 Columbus, Neb.**

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I will gladly inform anyone addicted to **COCAINE, MORPHINE, OPIUM OR LAUDANUM**, of a never-failing harmless Home Cure. Address **MRS. M. I. BALDWIN P. O. Box 1212 Chicago, Ill.**

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From cradle to grave—past, present and future correctly treated and success assured in love and business. Mysteries revealed. My horoscopes are wonderful diviners; send date of birth and stamp, and I will send you, entirely free, a horoscope of your life, or if you send 10c I will also send a description of the person you should love, and my wonderful magazine of NEW IDEAS. They call me the wonder of the twentieth century, because of my true predictions. Only thirty years old, I have made over $100,000. I may make you equally successful if you heed my advice.

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My skin was getting yellow, and liver spots were getting all over me. I had often heard of Ripans Tabules and a friend told me to try them. I started to take the Tabules, and I can never praise them enough. I am feeling better than I have for three years. They are indeed a wonderful medicine. They keep my bowels regular, and my skin is much clearer than it was.

At druggists.

The Five-Cent packet is enough for an ordinary occasion. The family bottle, 60 cents, contains a supply for a year.

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Whole Family

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It tells all about the

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and contains artistic drawings, illustrating and suggesting arrangements of cozy corners, window seats, etc., where our Kapok cushions can be used to beautify the home. Our Ezybed Kapok Mattresses, Pillows and Cushions are **odorless, non-absorbent** and **vermin proof.** Physicians recommend them because they are sanitary as well as comfortable. We sell them on **60 Nights' Trial** and pay all express charges to your home. Booklet Free.

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Dept. H, Cincinnati, O.

Pillows, Bolsters, Window Seat Cushions, Couch Cushions, Chair Cushions, Yacht Cushions.

VICK'S Surprise DAHLIAS

12 for 60 cents
23 for $1.00
Half the usual price.
Quantity Limited.

These Dahlias are grown from seeds of all classes, Pompon, Show and Cactus. Both double and single flowers will be produced; they have never blossomed, but will this season. New varieties of Dahlias are obtained from seedlings and every purchaser can be assured of a wealth of bloom and possibly one or two valuable novelties. No such offer has ever before been made. **Order now.**

VICK'S GARDEN AND FLORAL GUIDE free with every order, and to others who write and mention what they wish to grow. Splendidly illustrated. Full of information and advice on planting. Vegetable and Flower Seeds, Roses and Shrubbery, Plants, Bulbs and Small Fruits—it contains them all. Whether you grow for profit or pleasure it will help you. Send for it.

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FAT FOLKS I am a trained nurse. 8 years ago I reduced 50 pounds—Oh so easy. No starving, no wrinkles, no regain. Simple, you take it at home. Nothing to sell. Inclose stamp. Write today. MRS. B. C. SCHOFELD, 427 Granite Building, Rochester, N. Y.

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Roses, Bulbs, Vines, Shrubs, Fruit and Ornamental Trees. The best by 45 years test. 1000 acres, 40 In. Hardy Roses, 44 Greenhouses of Plants and Everblooming Roses. Mail size postpaid, safe arrival guaranteed. Try us, our goods will please you and direct deal will save you money. Valuable 168-page Catalogue **Free.**

THE STORRS & HARRISON CO.,
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To all Who Suffer from

Spinal Deformities

85 per cent. cheaper than the old methods. 100 per cent better. Weighs ounces where others weigh pounds. For Men, Women and Children; none too young, none too old to be cured.

We offer the only Scientific Appliance ever invented for the relief and cure of this unsightly condition; cured Mr. P. B. Sheldon, the inventor, of curvature of the spine of 30 years' standing.

Throw away the cumbersome and expensive plaster-of-paris and sole-leather jackets.

Our Appliance is light in weight, durable and conforms to the body as not to evidence that a support is worn. It is constructed on strictly scientific anatomical principles, and is truly a godsend to all sufferers from spinal troubles, male or female. We also make Scientific Appliances for protruding abdomen, weak back, stooping shoulders. Send for free booklet and letters from physicians, physical instructors, and those who know from experience of our wonderful appliances. Satisfaction guaranteed. Price, $4 to $25.

STEAMBURG, N. Y., Feb. 9, 1901.

After having worn the plaster-of-paris jackets, I can truthfully say your appliance is far more comfortable to wear. It corrects curvature quite as well and fits the body so perfectly that no one would suspect I was wearing one. You have my life-long gratitude and well wishes. IDA BLOOD.

☞ *The plaster-of-paris jacket above mentioned weighed 8 1-4 lbs. The Philo Burt Appliance put on in its place weighed 17 ounces—a difference of 115 ounces.*

THE PHILO BURT MFG. CO.
33 THIRD ST., JAMESTOWN, N. Y.

FREE A Catalogue of Rare and Choice Palms, Dwarf Pot Oranges, etc. Jessamine Gardens, Jessamine, Fla. **FLOWERS**

ANY LADY *Can Easily Make* **$18 TO $25** weekly by representing us in her locality and as the position is pleasant and profitable the year round we will gladly send particulars free to all. Even your spare time is valuable. This is no deception, and if you really want to make money address WOMAN'S MUTUAL BENEFIT CO., Box 36, JOLIET, ILL.

LET US SEND Our LEADER BICYCLE

High Grade, 1902 model, for your examination. **It is the wonder value of the new year,** the perfection point in bicycle construction. Up-to-date in design, size and trimmings. Weighs twenty-two pounds, and guaranteed to carry

A Rider Weighing 600 Pounds.

Send for this wheel, examine it critically; costs you nothing to examine it. If you like it, pay Express Agent $9.95 and expressage. If you don't like it, return it. Write today for 1902, large free Catalogue of BICYCLES and SUNDRIES.

$9.95

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CURES AILMENTS OF WOMEN

Female Weakness,
Inflammations,
Internal Pains,
Lassitude,
Backache,
Headache,
Nervousness,
Indigestion,
Melancholy,
Lung Diseases.

TRIAL FREE

It brings health, comfort, attractiveness. Wholly external. Worn with or without corsets. Simple, comfortable, adjustable to fit any figure. Invaluable to the prospective mother. We receive from 10,000 to 20,000 letters every year like the following:

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I had been ailing for fifteen years from backache, headache, constipation and prolapsus. I had been treated by some of the best specialists in the country without avail. Your brace cured me. The organs have gone back to proper position and remain there. Mrs. G. C. Shuman.

Free trial for 30 days. Particulars and illustrated book, mailed free in plain, sealed envelope. **Write today** to

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WANTED—Agents everywhere, either sex; Zarema Diamond; experts puzzled to detect from genuine; liberal commission; catalogue, sample (ring or stud) free on application.
ZAREMA DIAMOND CO.,
115 Adams Street, CHICAGO, ILL.

CHILDREN TEETHING

For Children While Cutting Their Teeth.

An Old and Well Tried Remedy

FOR OVER FIFTY YEARS.

MRS. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP has been used for over FIFTY YEARS by MILLIONS of MOTHERS for their CHILDREN WHILE TEETHING, with PERFECT SUCCESS. IT SOOTHES THE CHILD, SOFTENS the GUMS, ALLAYS all PAIN; CURES WIND COLIC, and is the best remedy for DIARRHŒA. Sold by Druggists in every part of the World. Be sure and ask for **Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup**, and take no other kind.

Twenty-five Cents a Bottle.

Gilbert's Heel Cushions
Worn Inside the Shoe
Make Easy Walking.

Arch the Instep. Increase Height. Make Better Fitting Shoes. Remove Jar in Walking. Indorsed by physicians. Simply placed in the heel, felt down. Don't require larger shoes. 1-2 in., 25c.; 3-4 in., 35c.; 1 in., 50c. per pair. At shoe and department stores.

READ. Send name, size shoe, height desired, and 2c. stamp for pair on 10 days' trial.
GILBERT MFG. CO., 50 Elm St., Rochester, N. Y.

DEAF NESS and Head Noises permanently cured. Illustrated book and month's treatment **free.** DR. POWELL, 23E Huntington Avenue, Boston, Mass.

EAT COOK'S

DON'T COOK.

Put in colander

1. Pour the dry flakes from the package into a colander
2. Put a liberal amount of salt into a little boiling water
3. Pour the boiling salted water on the rice, through the colander
4. Drain, shake slightly, and turn out on a hot dish; serve with sugar and milk. That is all—and the rice is perfectly prepared in less than a minute

Salt the water

Send One Coupon and 10c. for our Doll

BEAUTIFUL TABLEWARE FREE

We will give you our handsome **50-PIECE DINNER SET, full size, lavishly decorated and gold-lined,** or 25 per cent commission in cash if you will introduce for us among your friends and neighbors 24 boxes of Salvona Soaps or bottles of Perfume, and to each purchaser you can give a beautiful cut glass pattern, 10-inch fruit bowl **FREE.** We pay all freight charges and give ample time to deliver. Write at once for our new plans showing many useful and handsome articles which you can secure **FREE.**

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To prove the correctness of my unerring Astro-written Astrological Reading or Horoscope **FREE!** ogical System I will send you a personal type- of your life if you will send me your date of birth, sex and 2c return postage. My readings have made thousands of people happy and prosperous for life, and you will not regret it if you write to me. Write at once. All letters held confidential. **PROF. H. EDISON,** B.C. BINGHAMTON, N. Y. ——THEY CALL HE THE WONDERFUL ASTROLOGER.——

FLAKED RICE

FOR BABY TOO.

NEW BORN INFANTS. One cup of Cook's Flaked Rice, one quart water, boil ten minutes, add a pint of milk, pinch of salt, and a very little sugar, and strain

THREE MONTHS OLD CHILD. Use double the quantity of Cook's Flaked Rice two cups and do not strain

Cook's Flaked Rice Co., 1 Union Sq., N. Y.

Snoring Stopped Instantly,

prevented and cause permanently removed by a neat and simple device which affords no inconvenience to user. **Failure is Impossible.** It also prevents sleeping with **open mouth**, which habit ruins so many throats and vocal cords and in many cases brings on diseases of nose, throat and lungs. **NO MEDICINE.** Correspondence confidential in plain sealed envelope. Address, **SNOR-O-DONT, A-10 142 Monroe St., Chicago, Ill.**

MORPHINE, OPIUM, LAUDANUM, COCAINE habits permanently **cured** by secret, painless treatment. **Cure guaranteed.** Individual treatment by eminent physician. **Correspondence confidential.**
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MORPHINE

Opium habits permanently cured at home. No loss of time from business—no relapses. Free sample and book (in plain sealed envelope). Describe case. DR. PURDY, Room 47, Binz Building, Houston, Texas

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Makes Women Beautiful

Marvelous development accomplished by the new and wonderful "Vestro" method of enlarging the Female Bust.

Flat-chested and unattractive women are quickly developed into commanding figures that excite wonderment and admiration.

A new and surprisingly effective home treatment has been discovered that enlarges the female bust at least six inches. Women who are not lacking in this respect will not be particularly interested, but those who by some unfortunate circumstance of health or occupation are deficient in this development will be very much fascinated by the peculiar prominence achieved by the treatment. It is called "Vestro" and is controlled by the well known Aurum Medicine Co.

There is no doubt about the marvelous power of this new treatment to develop the bust to a gratifying extent. Any lady who wishes to know more about Vestro should send her name and address to the Aurum Medicine Co. They will send free, in plain sealed envelope by mail, a new "beauty book" they have just prepared, also photographs from life showing the actual development induced and a great number of testimonials from physicians, chemists and prominent ladies all commending the wonderful and remarkable power of Vestro to enlarge the bust no matter how flat the chest may be. Do not fail to write at once. The beauty book and portraits will delight you. All you need do is to send name and address and a two-cent stamp to pay postage. Address
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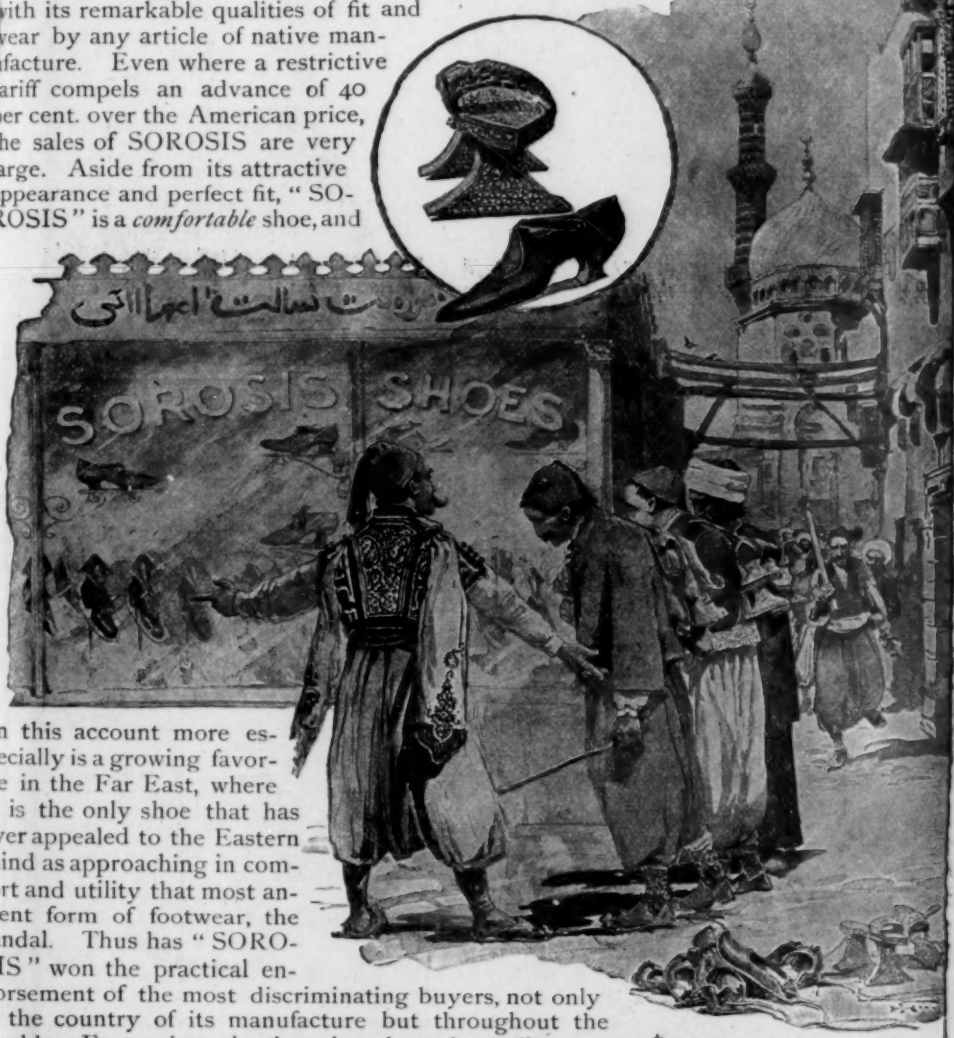

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